

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 OPIC-03 COME-00 L-02 /019 W

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R 181124Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1735

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 4487

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EINV, TH

SUBJ: TEMCO

REF: BANGKOK 4394

1. TEMCO GENERAL MANAGER P.J.L. LYONS REPORTS HE AND SHELL COLLEAGUES ARRIVED FOR MEETING WITH MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, NITHIPHAT CHILICHAN, EVENING MARCH 17 WITH LETTER CLEARED WITH NEW YORK AND THE HAGUE OFFERING TO NEGOTIATE EXPANDED THAI GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION IN TEMCO. MINISTER INFORMED LYONS HIS SUGGESTED SOLUTION TO PROBLEM, TRANSFERRING 51 PERCENT OWNERSHIP TO RTG, HAD BEEN STRONGLY OPPOSED BY 75 PERCENT OF SENI CABINET DURING AFTERNOON MEETING AND THE REQUESTED REVOCATION ORDER MUST BE ISSUED MARCH 18. LYONS NONETHELESS GAVE MINISTER TEMCO LETTER OFFERING TO NEGOTIATE FOR INCREASED RTG PARTICIPATION AND DEPARTED.

2. AS OF 1600 LOCAL TIME MARCH 18 LETTER OF REVOCATION NOT RECEIVED BY TEMCO. LYONS HAS INFORMED UNION CARBIDE HEAD-QUARTERS NEW YORK AND HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TRANSMIT REVOCATION ORDER NEW YORK FOR STUDY UPON RECEIPT. COMPANY HAS SEVEN DAY PERIOD BEFORE, AS LAW STIPULATES, IT IS SUPPOSED TO TURN OVER LEASE DOCUMENTS TO RTG. LYONS REITERATED COMPANY WOULD DEMAND DETAILED REASONS FOR REVOCATION IF NOT GIVEN IN ORDER AND INSISTED COMPANY BELIEVED IT HAD COMPLIED WITH ALL ASPECTS AGREEMENT.

3. CARETAKER PRIME MINISTER SENI HAD INSISTED TERMINATION OF CONCESSION WAS AN ADMINISTRATIVE RATHER THAN A POLICY
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DECISION AND MINISTER OF INDUSTRY WOULD MAKE DECISIONS.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS HAS QUICKLY EXPOSED THIS ABSURD
PRONOUNCEMENT. MAJORITY OF SENI CABINET CONTINUES TO
HOPE CANCELLATION WILL WIN POINTS FOR THEM IN FUTURE
ELECTION CAMPAIGNS.

4. WE ASSUME SENI GOVERNMENT GILL DELIVER REVOCATION
ORDER BEFORE IT LEAVES OFFICE. IT IT DOES NOT DO SO IN-
COMING PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT STATED IN A PRESS
CONFERENCE MARCH 17 HE WOULD TAKE OVER THE PROBLEM AND
STUDY IT. HE EMPHASIZED AT THIS JUXTURE HE CANNOT ASSERT
OR GUARANTEE WHETHER THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE CONCESSION WILL
BE BENEFICIAL FOR THAILAND OR NOT.
MASTERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINING CONCESSIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO04487
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750094-0868
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750342/aaaablkp.tel
Line Count: 74
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BANGKOK 4394
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUN 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <21 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TEMCO
TAGS: EINV, EMIN, TH, TEMCO, (NITHIPHAT CHALICHAN), (LYONS P J L)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006